

Why Consumers Buy Muscadine Wine at Independent Wineries

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Introduction

A consumer survey was conducted during the fall of 2001 to collect data that would document various characteristics of marketing muscadine wine directly to the final consumers and to provide information about their buying behavior. The overall goal was to provide independent winery managers with information that will help them identify their market segments and assist them to better market their wines. This goal was accomplished by concentrating on the following objectives:

1. Determine why consumers purchase muscadine wine.
2. Determine the effectiveness of alternative advertising and promotional programs in influencing customers to purchase muscadine wine from direct market wineries.
3. Determine consumer satisfaction with the muscadine wine and services currently offered at the direct market wineries.
4. Determine if consumers are aware of the potential health benefits associated with the consumption of muscadine wine.
5. Recommend specific changes that will assist winery managers improve their marketing, advertising, and promotional programs.

Methodology

A customer survey was conducted at three independent wineries in North and South Carolina. These operations represented typical direct market wineries and featured muscadine wine although other varieties of wine were also available for sale. Customers were randomly selected to participate in the survey at each location on a consecutive Friday and Saturday.

Customer Profiles

A total of 481 useable questionnaires were collected in this survey (Table 1). Almost 59%, or 283, of the customers interviewed in this survey purchased muscadine wine during their visit to the winery, while 41.2 %, or 198 customers did not buy muscadine wine. The largest percentage of surveyed customers who bought muscadine wine was 79.4% at Location #1 and the lowest percentage was 37.9 at Location #3.

Table 1. The Number of On-Site Winery Interviews by Location

Location	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine # customers	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine # customers	Total Customers # customers
#1	155	40	195
#2	73	68	141
#3	55	90	145
Total	283	198	481
Percent	58.8	41.2	100.0

The “typical” consumer who bought muscadine wine was between 25 and 44 years old, had a household income between \$60,000 and \$74,999 and two family members worked 40 or more hours per week (Table 2). The average age for all of these customers was 49 years old and the primary market area appears to be within 50 miles of the winery with almost 95% of the consumers traveling less than 50 miles. Therefore, excluding those who drove over 50 miles, the average number of miles customers traveled to the business was 9.7 miles, with 30.0% driving between 5 and 9.9 miles and 29.7% driving less than 5 miles

The “typical” customer who did not buy muscadine wine was also between 25 and 44 years old and at least one family members worked 40 or more hours per week. Over 55% of these customers had an annual household income over \$60,000, with 27.6% reporting an income between \$60,000 and \$74,999 and 27.6% reporting an income greater than \$75,000,. The average age was 46.4 years old and 88.4% traveled less than 50 miles. Again excluding those who traveled over 50 miles, the average mileage these customers traveled to the winery was 9.4 miles, with 37.5% driving less than 5 miles and 23.7% driving between 5 and 9.9 miles.

Households made up of male and female couples characterized the largest number of the shopping parties followed by homes composed of couples with children (Table 3). Single females represented the third most frequent type of household among the shoppers and households with three or more adults was fourth.

Table 2. Selected Demographic and Distance Traveled for Surveyed Customers

Demographic	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customer s (%)
Age:			
<18	3.5	2.0	2.9
18-24	3.5	2.0	2.9
25-44	32.2	46.0	37.8
45-54	24.0	23.2	23.7
55-64	19.4	14.1	17.3
≥ 65	17.3	12.6	15.4
Average Age	49.0	46.4	49.0
Household Income:			
< \$15,000	0.8	0.6	0.7
\$15,000 - \$29,999	14.7	14.4	14.6
\$30,000 - \$44,999	18.5	12.1	16.0
\$45,000 - \$59,999	22.3	17.8	20.5
\$60,000 - \$74,999	23.8	27.6	25.3
≥ \$75,000	20.0	27.6	23.0
Adults Working ≥ 40 Hours/Week			
None	21.6	17.7	20.0
1	34.4	39.9	36.7
2	40.8	37.9	39.6
3 to 4	3.2	4.6	3.8
Miles Traveled			
0 to 4.9 miles	29.7	37.5	32.9
5 to 9.9 miles	30.0	23.7	27.4
10 to 19.9 miles	21.2	13.6	18.1
20 to 49.9 miles	13.8	13.6	13.7
≥ 50 miles	5.3	11.6	7.9
Average Miles Traveled			
With customers traveling ≥ 50 miles	12.8	17.2	14.7
Without customers traveling ≥ 50 miles	9.7	9.4	9.6

Table 3. Composition of the Household

Members in the Household	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine # customers	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine # customers	All Customers # customers
Adult female	29	21	50
Adult male	9	6	15
Adult male and female	142	86	228
Adult female w/ one or more children	2	2	4
Two or more adult females	3	4	7
Adult female and male w/ children	53	36	89
Two or more adult males	8	8	16
Two or more adult females w/ children	1	0	1
Adult male w/ children	0	0	0
Two or more adult males w/ children	0	0	0
Three or more adults	24	20	44
Three or more adults w/ children	11	15	26
Total	282	198	480

Purchase and Consumption Patterns

This was the first visit to the winery for over 52% of the respondents and almost 48% were repeat customers, having visited the same winery previously (Table 4). New customers accounted for 50.2% of those who bought muscadine wine and for 55.6% of those who did not buy muscadine wine. Repeat customers made up 49.8% of those who bought muscadine wine compared to 44.4% who did not buy muscadine wine. Most of the customers had not visited another direct market winery within the previous year whereas 42.4% had stopped at another winery.

The vast majority of the customers who tasted muscadine wine during their shopping trip also bought some of the wine but most of those who did not sample any muscadine wine also did not buy any of this type of wine. If the individual tasted muscadine wine during their visit, they were then asked if this was the first time that they had ever sampled the wine. Overall, 68.9% of the visitors had sampled the wine previously while 31.1% had not. Almost 75% of these customers who purchased muscadine wine had tasted muscadine wine previously compared to 54% of those who

did not buy muscadine wine. Individuals who did not sample any muscadine wine during their visit were asked if they had ever tasted muscadine wine. Interestingly, almost 99% of the customers who bought muscadine had previously tasted the wine and 100% of the customers who did not purchased any of the wine had also tasted muscadine wine.

Table 4. Customers History of Visiting the Winery and Wine Tasting

	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
Is this your first visit to this winery?			
Yes (New Customers)	50.2	55.6	52.4
No (Repeat Customers)	49.8	44.4	47.6
Have you visited any other direct market wineries this year?			
Yes	41.7	43.5	42.4
No	58.3	56.5	57.6
Did you taste muscadine wine today?			
Yes	73.1	38.4	58.8
No	26.9	61.6	41.2
If yes, is this your first time tasting muscadine wine?			
Yes	25.5	46.0	31.1
No	74.5	54.0	68.9
If no, have you ever tasted muscadine wine ?			
Yes	98.7	100.0	99.5
No	1.3	0	0.5

Overall, 77.3% of the consumers who sampled muscadine wine for the first time liked the taste compared to 13.6% who disliked the flavor (Table 5). Almost 98% of the customers, who bought some muscadine wine, sampled the wine for the first time during their visit and liked the taste. However, almost 46% the customers who did not buy muscadine wine liked the taste of the wine while over 31% not like the flavor.

Most, 46%, of the customers were going to serve the muscadine wine with a meal and 44.2 % intended to use the wine as a pre-dinner cocktail (Table 6). Giving the wine as a gift was the third most prevalent use and just over 19% of the respondents planned to serve the wine to guests. Only 8.1% of the consumers were going to serve

the wine as a desert and 2.5% anticipated using the wine in their cooking.

Table 5. Reaction of Customers who Tasted Muscadine Wine for the First Time

Reaction	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
Do not like it	1.9	31.4	13.6
Like it	98.1	45.7	77.3
Other	0.0	22.9	9.1
Total Customers	53	35	88

Table 6. Intended Use of Muscadine Wine*

Intended Use	Customers (%)
Serve with a meal	46.6
Drink as a cocktail before dinner	44.2
Give as a gift	33.2
Serve to guests	19.4
Serve as a dessert	8.1
Use in cooking	2.5
Other	3.5
Total number of responses	283

*Respondents could select more than one intention.

The customers who bought muscadine wine purchased an average of 6.4 bottles of muscadine wine and 0.6 bottles of another wine variety during their visit (Table 7). Most consumers bought one or two bottles and three to five bottles was the second most frequent amount purchased. However ninety-three customers, or almost 33%, purchased over five bottles of muscadine wine, with fifty shoppers buying between 11 and 20 bottles and twenty-one customers buying more than 20 bottles.

The customers who did not buy muscadine wine purchased an average of 3.5 bottles of another variety of wine that was also sold at the winery (Table 8). One or two bottles of wine was again the typical number of bottles bought and three to five bottles was the second most common number of bottles purchased. Only eighteen, or about 12%, of these customers purchased over five bottles of wine.

Table 7. Amount of Wine Purchased by Muscadine Wine Customers

Number of bottles	Muscadine Wine (Customers)	Other Wine Varieties (Customers)
1-2	134	44
3-5	56	22
6-10	22	3
11-20	50	1
> 20	21	0
Average number of bottles purchased	6.4	0.6
Total customers	283	70

Table 8. Amount of Wine Purchased by Customers who did not buy Muscadine Wine

Number of bottles	Muscadine Wine (Customers)	Other Wine Varieties (Customers)
1-2	0	104
3-5	0	32
6-10	0	8
11-20	0	5
> 20	0	5
Average	0	3.5
Total customers	0	154

Since most customers planned to consume the wine themselves, it was not surprising that “taste” was the primary factor that influenced the customers’ decision to buy muscadine wine (Table 9). Information about the health benefits associated with drinking wine was the second most important reason that influenced their purchase decisions while discount prices, primarily for muscadine wine, was the third major factor.

On the other hand, 25.9% of the customers who did not buy muscadine wine said that they did not like the taste and 22.4% said that the wine did not fit into their meal plans (Table 10). One indicated that the price of the wine impacted their purchase decision.

Table 9. Most Important Factors in Consumers Purchase Decisions

Reason	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Wine Customers (%)
Good Taste	94.7	94.3	85.2
Health Information	50.5	18.6	31.0
Discount Price	36.0	3.0	22.0
Free Samples	12.7	5.7	10.0
Descriptive Information	5.0	7.1	4.2
Other	1.8	1.4	2.3

Table 10. Reasons Why Customers Did Not Purchase Muscadine Wine

Reason	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)
Do not like it	25.9
Does not fit meal plans	22.4
Too expensive	0.0
Other	46.9

When asked how much muscadine wine they planned to buy in 2001 compared to 2000, most of the customers said that they intended to buy approximately the same amount (Table 11). Over 37% of the consumers indicated that they would buy more wine in 2001 compared to 2002 and fewer than 3% said that they would buy less muscadine wine.

Table 11. Customers' Buying Intentions for Muscadine Wine

Amount of muscadine wine customers intent to buy in 2001 compared to 2000	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
About the same as last year	51.8	66.3	55.3
More than last year	43.4	20.0	37.7
Less than last year	1.6	6.3	2.7
Do not know	2.8	7.5	7.5
First year to buy muscadine wine	0.4	0.0	0.0

Consumers were asked to list the different varieties of wine that they consumed regularly. Not surprisingly, the majority of the customers who bought muscadine wine also said that they drink muscadine wine regularly (Table 12). Almost 43% of these individuals also drink White Zinfadel on a regular basis, while 25.4 % often drink Merlot and 22.6% consume Chardonnay regularly.

On the other hand, Merlot was the most preferred wine among the customers who did not buy muscadine wine accounting for almost 42% of the respondents. Over 35% of these consumers drink Chardonnay regularly, 33.8% drink White Zinfadel, and 20.7% drink Cabernet Sauvignon. Only 11.6% of these customers said that they frequently drank muscadine wine.

Table 12. Types of Wine the Interviewed Customers Consume Regularly

Type	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
Muscadine	51.2	11.6	34.9
White Zinfadel	42.8	33.8	39.0
Merlot	25.4	41.9	32.2
Chardonnay	22.6	35.9	28.1
Cabernet Sauvignon	8.8	20.7	13.7
Pinot Grigio	5.3	5.1	5.2
Other	9.5	17.2	12.7
Do not Know	3.2	4.6	4.3

Both the customers who did and did not buy muscadine wine had the same relative ranking for their favorite varieties of muscadine wine (Table 13). Scuppernong was easily the most popular variety of while Magnolia was a distance second and consumers ranked Noble third. Nesbitt and Carlos were listed by only 7.3% and 6.1%, respectively, of the customers.

Most customers only drank wine on a weekly basis (Table 14). A larger percentage of the customers who bought muscadine wine consumed it daily while more consumers who did not buy muscadine wine only drank wine monthly or less than once a month.

Table 13. Customers Favorite of Muscadine Wine Varieties

Variety	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
Scuppernong	41.7	41.4	46.0
Magnolia	20.5	10.1	18.0
Noble	11.2	8.9	10.7
Nesbitt	7.6	6.3	7.3
Carlos	7.2	2.5	6.1
Other	26.9	20.3	25.3
Do not know	1.6	6.3	2.7
None	0.8	3.8	1.5

Table 14. Frequency of Wine Consumption

Frequency	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
Daily	20.9	16.2	18.9
Weekly	46.3	39.4	43.5
Monthly	21.2	27.8	23.9
< Once a Month	9.9	12.6	11.0
Never	1.8	4.0	2.7

Advertising Effectiveness and Factors Influencing Selection of the Winery

When asked what prompted their visit to the winery where they were interviewed, only 13.2% of the respondents said that advertising influenced their shopping decision while 86.8% indicated that their decision was not influenced by any type of advertisement (Table 15). Over 15% of the consumers who bought muscadine wine said that an advertisement influenced them to visit the winery and about 85% were not swayed by an ad. Similarly, only 10.2% of the shoppers who did not buy muscadine wine stopped at the winery because of an advertisement, while 89.8% said that

advertising did not influence on their decision.

Table 15. Impact of Advertisements on Consumers' Decision to Visit the Winery

An advertisement attracted the customer to the outlet	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine	All Customers
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Yes	15.3	10.2	13.2
No	84.7	89.8	86.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Of the 62 customers who were influenced by a specific advertisement, 26, or 41.9% of the respondents, said that the ad for the winery was posted on either a sign or billboard (Table 16). Newspaper advertisements had the second largest impact with a 14.5% response rate while the percentage of respondents who found the winery via the internet was third with 11.3% and direct mailers were fourth with 9.7%. Four individuals located the winery through the PYO directory published by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) and only one person mentioned a TV commercial.

Table 16. Customer Response Rate by Type of Advertisement

Type of Advertisement	Customers Who Responded to an Advertisement Number
Signs/Billboards	26
Newspaper Advertisement	9
Internet	7
Direct Mail Brochure, Flyer or Postcard	6
Association or NCDA&CS Directory	4
TV Commercial	1
Other	9
Total Customers	62

When asked what information in the advertisement attracted them to the winery, 50% of the customers who responded to an ad said that the types of wine that were promoted influenced their decision and 22.5% said that information about the winery location affected their decision (Table 17). Information about wine prices persuaded 14.5% of the respondents to visit the winery but redeemable coupons and the hours of operation did not influenced any of the customers.

Table 17. Information in the Advertisement that Attracted the Customers to the Winery

Information in the Advertisement	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine	All Customers
	Number	Number	Number
Type of wines	25	6	31
Winery Location	8	6	14
Wine Prices/Sale	6	3	9
Coupons	0	0	0
Hours of Operation	0	0	0
Other	3	5	8

Customers whose visit was not motivated by advertising were presented a list of possible reasons for selecting a winery and asked to select the primary reason that influenced their decision to stop at the business. With over 31% of the consumers who bought wine indicating that a family member or friend told them about the operation, "personal referrals" was the most common reason these consumers gave for deciding to visit the winery (Table 18). Customers who just drove by and decided to stop was the second most important reason, accounting for 24.1% of the respondents and convenient location was chosen by 16.9% of the consumers and was the third most important reason. The quality of the wine was the fourth key factor in the customers' decision, comprising slightly more than 12% of the respondents.

Most, 30.1%, of the customers who did not buy muscadine wine said that they just happened to be driving by the winery and decided to stop, however personal referrals was a close second with 29.6% of the respondents. Convenient location was third, chosen by 16.5% of the consumers, and 13.1% of the patrons viewed the trip to the winery as an "entertainment outing". Only 2.8% of these customers indicated that they decided to visit the winery based on the quality of the wine.

Customers who were not influenced by an ad were asked if they could remember seeing any advertisement within the last month promoting the winery where they were interviewed. Over 48% of the customers who bought muscadine wine could recall at least one type of advertisement while 51.5% could not remember a specific ad (Table 19). Ninety-seven these individuals remembered an advertisement that was posted on a sign or billboard and direct mailers were a distant second with 7 respondents. Even fewer of the consumers did not buy muscadine wine could remember an advertisement. Only 22.9% recalled a specific ad and 77.1% could not. Of the 45 customers who could think of an ad, 31 remembered seeing a roadside sign or billboard promoting the winery and 4 recalled a newspaper advertisement.

Table 18. Reasons Customers Who's Visit Was Not Prompted by an Advertisement Stopped at the Winery

Reason	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
Personal referred	31.7	29.6	30.8
Drove by and decided to stop	24.1	30.1	26.6
Location/Convenience	16.9	16.5	16.7
Quality of wine	12.2	2.8	8.2
Entertainment outing	8.9	13.1	10.7
Wine tasting	1.3	1.1	1.2
Low wine prices	1.3	0	0.7
Farm Experience	0.4	0	0.2
Variety/selection of wines	0.0	0.6	0.2
Other	3.4	6.3	4.6

Table 19. Customers Ability to Recall any of the Winery's Advertisements that were Run During the Previous Thirty Days

Customer Could Recall Any of the Advertisements:	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customers (%)
Yes	48.5	22.9	37.6
No	51.5	77.1	62.4
Types of Ads Recalled	Number of Responses		
Signs/Billboards	97	31	128
Direct Mail Brochure or Postcard	7	3	10
Internet	6	2	8
Cable TV	4	1	5
Newspaper Advertisement	3	4	7
Newspaper Insert	2	0	2
TV Commercial	2	0	2
Yellow Pages	1	1	2
NCDA&CS Directory	0	0	0
Radio Commercial	0	0	0
Other	2	3	5

While most of the customers did not know the difference between scuppernong and muscadine grapes, a larger percentage of customers who bought muscadine wine knew the difference compared to those who did not buy muscadine wine (Table 20). Most individuals who bought muscadine wine also knew about the nutritional benefits of muscadine grapes and muscadine grape products while the majority of the consumers who did not buy muscadine wine did not know about the nutritional benefits. However, the largest percentage of the customers indicated that additional information about the nutritional benefits would have a positive influence on their decision to buy muscadine grapes and muscadine grape products.

Table 20. Consumer's Knowledge of Nutritional Benefits of Muscadine Grapes

	Customers who Bought Muscadine Wine (%)	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine (%)	All Customer s (%)
Do you know the difference between Scuppernong and Muscadine grapes?			
Yes	42.4	37.6	40.4
No	57.6	62.4	59.6
Do you know the nutritional benefits of muscadine grapes?			
Yes	71.0	38.5	57.6
No	29.0	61.5	42.4
Would nutritional facts influence you to buy (buy more) muscadine grapes?			
Yes	80.4	60.9	72.5
No	19.6	39.1	27.5

Determining the peak consumer traffic periods was not an objective of this study, but the number of completed surveys per day is directly related to the volume of traffic and gives some insight into the busiest day of operation. Saturday was easily the busiest day with 69% of the total respondents compared to 31% on Friday (Table 21).

Table 21. Day the Surveys were Completed

Location	Friday	Saturday	Total
#1	67	128	195
#2	34	107	141
#3	48	97	145
Total	149	332	481
Percent	31.0	69.0	100.0

Wineries Compared to Other Selected retail Operations

Since 1992, the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at North Carolina State University in conjunction with the NCDA&CS have conducted a series of consumer surveys for various industries that sale a portion of their products at retail operations. All of these studies focused on meeting similar objectives; therefore the surveys contained comparable questions. It is interesting to note that the muscadine wineries had the lowest percentage of repeat customers relative to the other industries that have been surveyed and conversely, the highest percentage of new customers (Table 22). Garden centers had the highest percentage of repeat customers with approximately 90% of the consumers returning to the business while strawberry and muscadine grape direct market operations had roughly the same percentage of return business with 67% and 72%, respectively, repeat customers. The muscadine wineries, on the other hand, were the only businesses surveyed where the percentage of new customers was greater than the percentage of repeat customers with 52.4 % versus 47.6%, respectively.

Table 22. Percentage of New and. Repeat Customers at Selected Retail Operations

Garden Centers (1996*)	All Customers		
New Customers	9.0%		
Repeat Customers	91.0%		
Garden Centers (1997*)	All Customers		
New Customers	10.5%		
Repeat Customers	89.5%		
Strawberries (1999*)	All Customers	PYO Customers	Pre-pick Customers
New Customers	33.0%	39.6%	26.9%
Repeat Customers	67.0%	60.4%	73.1%
Fresh Muscadine Grapes (2001*)	All Customers	PYO Customers	Pre-pick Customers
New Customers	28.2%	30.0%	23.6%
Repeat Customers	71.8%	70.0%	76.4%
Muscadine Wineries (2001*)	All Customers	Customers Who Bought Muscadine Wine	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine
New Customers	52.4%	50.2%	55.6%
Repeat Customers	47.6%	49.8%	44.4%

*The year the study was conducted.

On average, the percentage of consumers whose visit to the winery was influenced by an advertisement was less than the direct market operations but greater than the garden centers (Table 23). The response rate for the muscadine grape and strawberry operations was 37.1% and 22.8%, respectively, while the average rates for the garden centers was 8.4% in 1996 and 5.7% in 1992 compared to a response rate of 13.2% for the wineries.

Table 23. Percentage of Customers who Responded to Advertising at Selected Retail Operations

Garden Centers (1992*)		Average Percentage	
Responded to ad		5.7%	
Did not respond to ad		94.3%	
Garden Centers (1996*)	Lowest Percentage	Average Percentage	Highest Percentage
Responded to ad	2.3%	8.4%	19.0%
Did not respond to ad	97.7%	91.6%	81.0%
Strawberries (1999*)	Lowest Percentage	Average Percentage	Highest Percentage
Responded to ad	4.0%	22.8%	23.5%
Did not respond to ad	96.0%	77.2%	76.5%
Fresh Muscadine Grapes (2001*)	PYO Customers	Average Percentage	Pre-pick Customers
Responded to ad	42.4%	37.1%	24.2%
Did not respond to ad	57.6%	62.9%	75.8%
Muscadine Wineries (2001*)	Customers Who Bought Muscadine Wine	Average Percentage	Customers Who Did Not Buy Muscadine Wine
Responded to ad	15.3%	13.2%	10.2%
Did not respond to ad	84.7%	86.8%	89.8%

*The year the study was conducted.

Summary and Recommendations

This study identified consumer demographic characteristics, attributes customers look for when selecting a winery, typical driving distances and the effectiveness of advertising. On average, customers tended to be middle age, have higher family incomes than the average North Carolina household and a large percentage reported that two family members worked 40 or more hours per week.

The majority of the surveyed customers lived within 10 miles of the winery; however customers who traveled over 10 miles made up almost 40% of the respondents. Since most wineries are found near the vineyards and can not be relocated closer to metropolitan areas, managers should monitor both the size of their market area and the demographic changes within their current market so they can adjust their operations to meet their customers' changing requirements. The relatively low percentage of repeat customers also suggests that more effort may need to be devoted to developing relationships with the customers while they are at the wineries. Winery personnel should be willing to spend time with individual shoppers to determine what the customer's wants and how they can provide something special to the customer.

A referral from either friends or family members was a major factor that influenced consumers' decisions to initially patronize a winery. Since "word-of-mouth" or personal referrals are so important in attracting new consumers, wineries that satisfy the customer's expectations in terms of wine selection, wine quality, and service have a comparative advantage in attracting new consumers. It is much easier to retain current customers than to prospect for new ones. Businesses that understand the lifetime value of a customer place significant emphasis on excellent service and knowledgeable sales staffs. Good customer service is also critical to garnering repeat business and building customer loyalty. Satisfied customers give positive referrals if they are pleased with the product and service.

Impulse buying is also an important reason that impacted first-time customers' decision to select a winery. That is, customers happened to be driving by, found the winery attractive, and decided to stop. The high percentage of impulse buyers reinforces the importance for winery managers to use good signage to attract customers businesses. It also supports the notion that managers should be sensitive to how their operation is viewed by the public and develop an attractive layout. Other research has shown that neat, clean retail outlets with ample parking, safe entries and exits off of and onto the highway and attractive displays help persuade customers to stop at these business.

Customers, whose shopping trip was prompted by an advertisement, said that the types of wine featured in the ad and the information about the location of the business in the advertisement attracted them to the winery. Therefore, managers should highlight this information in their advertisements and ensure that this information is easily visible in their print media.

Customers said that additional information about the health benefits associated with muscadine grapes and grape products could have a positive influence on their

purchase decisions. As a result of this finding, efforts to promote the health benefits associated with muscadine grapes and grape products should be increased to help strengthen the consumer demand. Since a regional promotional program that could reach a large number of consumers in the Southeastern United States would probably be costly, this could be an opportunity for the departments of agriculture and grape growers' associations in these states to develop cooperative advertisement campaign to promote the health benefits of muscadine grapes. However managers could also take advantage of this finding at individual wineries by providing literature that summarizes the health benefits that have been documented in numerous studies. There are opportunities for managers to use this informational in their individual promotional programs as well .

Independent wineries offer the managers an opportunity to sell their wines directly to the public and potentially receive higher net returns. Managers who can target their potential customers, know why consumers buy their wine and can attract customers to their operations are better prepared to provide the goods and services necessary to be financially successful. It was the purpose of this publication to provide managers with the additional information on consumer buying behavior and the factors that influence their purchases of muscadine wines to help them make more informed marketing, advertising and promotional decisions.